

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items

1. Name of Property

historic name Little River Turnpike Bridge

other names/site number Stone Bridge, Aldie; VDHR Inventory No. 053-0244

2. Location

street & number Route 50 not for publication ☐

city or town Aldie vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Loudoun code 107 zip code 20105

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally X statewide locally (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☒ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Transportation Sub: road-related (vehicular)

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<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Transportation Sub: road-related (vehicular)

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

<hr/>
<hr/>
<hr/>

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation
roof
walls
other stone, asphalt

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Period of Significance 1826 - 1866

Significant Dates 1826: bridge construction began

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Other: Virginia Department of Transportation; Virginia department of Historic Resources

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 18 728655 4317346	2	3	4

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Antony F. Opperman, Preservation Program Manager

organization Virginia Department of Transportation date May 2, 2007

street & number 1401 East Broad Street telephone 804-371-6749

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation

street & number 1401 East Broad Street telephone 804-371-6749

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Little River Turnpike Bridge
Loudoun County, Virginia**

Section 7 Page 1

Description

The Little River Turnpike Bridge is located in the town of Aldie in Loudoun County, Virginia. It carries two-lane Route 50 across the Little River, a tributary of the Potomac River. The bridge and the roadway it carries are owned and maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The Little River Turnpike Bridge is a two-span (i.e., two-barrel) masonry arch structure. The single pier, the spandrel walls, the parapet, abutments, and wing walls are all constructed of fieldstone. The arch ring (including keystone) and underside of the arch (the "intrados") are constructed of cut stone, especially well executed on the arch ring. The bridge is approximately 108 feet long, 23 feet wide overall, and 20 feet wide inside the parapet walls. The two segmental arches spring from the abutments and a single pier in the Little River, with the top of the parapet rising to a maximum height of approximately 19 feet above ordinary river level. The single pier extends beyond the upstream and downstream spandrel walls, thus buttressing the structure against expansion in those directions. The parapet wall rises to a modest peak above the pier as does the present roadway profile.

The Little River Turnpike Bridge has been modified little over the last 180 years. The roadway has been paved in asphalt, the parapets covered with concrete capstones, shotcrete has been applied to the underside of the arch, and a concrete fender has been installed to protect the upstream side of the pier from debris and scour. The downstream parapet wall was substantially reconstructed in 1998 due to damage from an out-of-control construction trailer. In 2004 the bridge was substantially reinforced by the installation of "grouted anchors", stainless steel rods surrounded by grout-injected bags designed to consolidate the rubble infill and carry a portion of the "live", or traffic loading. The grouted anchor reinforcement was installed by directional drilling and is not visible. These most recent modifications were undertaken by VDOT with sensitivity toward the historic character of the bridge and in consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Little River Turnpike Bridge
Loudoun County, Virginia**

Section 8 Page 2

Statement of Significance

The Little River Turnpike Bridge is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the Little River Turnpike and the "Turnpike Era" in the transportation history of the Commonwealth (Virginia Department of Transportation 1992:5-6). There was considerable interest at the turn of the nineteenth-century in improving Virginia's transportation infrastructure and dozens of private companies were chartered by the General Assembly to construct and maintain turnpikes, canals, and railroads – overseen by the Commonwealth's Board of Public Works (BPW). The Little River Turnpike Company (LRTC) was chartered in 1802 to establish "a Turnpike Road from the intersection of Duke Street in the Town of Alexandria with the south west line of the District of Columbia to the ford of Little River", a distance of approximately 34 miles (LRTC 1817). The LRTC completed 34 miles of "paved road" by 1811, and in 1817 stated its objective to spend surplus funds after the dividend of 1818 on "the reducing of the Hills and erecting permanent Bridges over the streams of water crossing said Road" (LRTC 1817). The Little River Turnpike was a prominent turnpike facility of the nineteenth century and its crossing of the Little River in Loudoun County was an essential part of its function and identity. While the assets of the LRTC ultimately were transferred to County administration and finally the Commonwealth as Route 50, the Little River Turnpike Bridge at Aldie today constitutes the most prominent surviving element of the turnpike.

Surviving LRTC records include little specific mention of the Little River Turnpike Bridge at Aldie. It is certain that a ford existed at that location before creation of the LRTC in 1802 and that a bridge of some type was constructed there by 1826. The LRTC's generally stated objective in 1817 to "erect permanent Bridges" (above) suggests that the first bridge may have been of timber construction since no specific mention was made at that time of *any* masonry (i.e., "permanent") structures. The LRTC's annual report for the year 1821 further reinforces the need for "permanent" structures by its stated goal "to erect good Bridges with Stone or Brick arches wherever new ones may be required by the wooden ones giving way" (LRTC 1822). The most specific mention of the Little River Turnpike Bridge at Aldie comes from the LRTC's annual reports for the years 1826 and 1827. In the report for 1826, the LRTC includes an expense item for \$400 paid "towards a new Bridge erected over Little river at the joint expense of our Comp'y and the Ashbys Gap Turnpike Co. "(LRTC 1827). That project was completed in 1827 and the LRTC's annual report for that year includes an expense item of "\$860.24 balance paid for new Bridge of stone erected over Little river" (LRTC 1828). The builder of the Little River Turnpike Bridge is not identified in LRTC records, though a Robert Ratcliff is mentioned as the builder of another stone bridge at Cub Run. The records of the Ashby's Gap Turnpike Company (AGTC) are generally silent about the Little River Turnpike Bridge, though one document with a date written either as 1824 or 1826 states "att little river is a stone bridge, built at the joint expense of the Company and the Little river Comp'y" (AGTC 1824?). It is possible to infer from this AGTC document that a masonry bridge existed at that location by 1824, though the much more specific description in LRTC records of the joint venture to build "a new Bridge ... over Little river" clearly indicates that the existing structure was built in 1826-1827, regardless of the nature of any predecessor bridges.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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**Little River Turnpike Bridge
Loudoun County, Virginia**

Section 8 Page 3

The Little River Turnpike Bridge also is significant under National Register Criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of masonry arch bridge construction. Though the distribution of load by arches has been employed in bridge construction for several millennia, masonry arch bridges in Virginia are relatively rare. Fewer than 130 highway arch bridges exist statewide and, of those, only nine are masonry arch structures. Of the nine masonry arch highway bridges, five were built by turnpike companies, including the Little River Turnpike Bridge at Aldie and the Goose Creek Arch Bridge built by the AGTC (also in Loudoun County; Miller et al. 2000). The use of fieldstone masonry, a cut-stone arch ring and keystone, and buttress supports are typical characteristics of the few surviving masonry arch turnpike bridges in Virginia. Those characteristics are especially demonstrated by the Little River Turnpike Bridge through its quality of execution. The fact that the Little River Turnpike Bridge still carries traffic with no weight restrictions (albeit with strengthening) also demonstrates the strength of masonry arch technology through its distinctive form and engineering function.

The Little River Turnpike Bridge exhibits its significance under National Register Criteria A and C through its high integrity of location, setting, feeling, design, materials, workmanship, and association. It remains at its original location and is surrounded by the historic resources of the Aldie community including the Aldie Mill, Miller's House, and Mercer House. The design and materials have been little altered except for asphalt paving, concrete parapet caps, shotcrete applied to the underside of the arches, and the addition of a concrete fender to the pier (for scour and debris protection). Recent repairs to the parapet and grouted-anchor reinforcement have been performed with sensitivity to the historic character of the bridge and in consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer. While Route 50 is no longer operated as the Little River Turnpike, the alignment of Route 50 is very close to the original turnpike alignment and the modern highway retains the name "Little River Turnpike" in parts of northern Virginia, a symbolic if not explicit association with the "Turnpike Era" in Virginia transportation history.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Little River Turnpike Bridge
Loudoun County, Virginia**

Section 9 Page 4

Major Bibliographical References

Ashby's Gap Turnpike Company

1824? Memorial & Petition of the Ashby's Gap Turnpike Co. Board of Public Works Records 204. Library of Virginia, Richmond.

Little River Turnpike Company

1817 Jonah Thompson's Report of the Little River Turnpike Company, Summary Statement from 1806 to 1817. Board of Public Works Records 309. Library of Virginia, Richmond.

1822 Report of the President & Directors of the Little River Turnpike Company, January 9, 1822. Board of Public Works Records 309. Library of Virginia, Richmond.

1827 Copy of the Report made by the President and Directors of the Little River Turnpike Company to the Stockholders, January 3, 1827. Board of Public Works Records 309. Library of Virginia, Richmond.

1828 The President and Directors of the Little River Turnpike Company respectfully report to the Stockholders, January 4, 1828. Board of Public Works Records 309. Library of Virginia, Richmond.

Miller, Ann B, Kenneth M. Clark, and Matthew C. Grimes

2000 *A Survey of Masonry and Concrete Arch Bridges in Virginia*. Virginia Transportation Research Council, Charlottesville.

Virginia Department of Transportation

1992 *A History of Roads in Virginia: "the most convenient wayes"*. Virginia Department of Transportation, Richmond and Virginia Transportation Research Council, Charlottesville.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Little River Turnpike Bridge
Loudoun County, Virginia**

Section 10 Page 5

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The historic property boundaries of the Little River Turnpike Bridge conform to the gross footprint of the structure within the Virginia Department of Transportation right-of-way.